NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-6332
MARK HOPKINS/STATE

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SHAPING UP THE SUMMIT

ANNCR:

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE AND SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO MEET IN GENEVA NEXT WEEK (EDITORS: DECEMBER 21-22) FOR TALKS ON FINAL POINTS OF A NEW STRATEGIC NUCLEAR ARMS LIMITATION TREATY. IF THOSE ARE SUCCESSFUL, IT'S EXPECTED THAT SOVIET PRESIDENT BREZHNEV AND U.S. PRESIDENT CARTER WILL HOLD A SUMMIT MEETING EARLY NEXT YEAR IN WASHINGTON TO SIGN THE TREATY AND REVIEW MAJOR SOVIET-AMERICAN AND WORLD ISSUES. FOR A LOOK AT HOW THE SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT MIGHT SHAPE UP, HERE IS VOA CORRESPONDENT MARK HOPKINS AT THE U.S. STATE DEPARMENT.

VOICE:

THIS IS LIKELY TO BE A DIFFERENT SUMMIT THAN THOSE ELABORATE MEETINGS BETWEEN SOVIET LEADER BREZHNEV AND PRESIDENT NIXON HELD DURING THE MORE GLOWING DAYS OF SOVIET-AMERICAN DETENTE.

U.S. OFFICIALS DEALING WITH SOVIET AFFAIRS EXPECT THAT THE CARTER-BREZHNEV MEETING, THE FIRST SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT IN FOUR YEARS, WILL BE A MORE MODEST AFFAIR.

THERE WILL OF COURSE BE STANDARD CEREMONY THAT GOES WITH A MAJOR STATE VISIT -- THE TWENTY-ONE GUN SALUTE, THE PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN.

INDEED, AMERICAN SOVIET AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT BREZHNEV WILL INSIST ON THE FULL CEREMONIAL TRAPPINGS, AS A MATTER OF PRESTIGE AND TO PUBLICIZE WHAT MISTER BREZHNEV WILL REGARD AS A SIGNAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, THAT IS, CONCLUSION OF A NEW ARMS CONTROL ACCORD.

THERE IS NO QUESTION, IN THE MINDS OF SOVIET AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS HERE, THAT THE SEVENTY-TWO YEAR OLD BREZHNEV WANTS

HIS LEADERSHIP RECORD TO DISPLAY HIM AS A WORLD STATESMAN, A MAN OF PEACE, A SOVIET LEADER WHO LED THE WORLD IN SLOWING THE ARMS RACE.

SO PRESIDENT BREZHNEV WILL WANT A GOOD DEAL OF CEREMONY IN THE UNITED STATES, IT IS BELIEVED HERE. HE MAY ALSO WANT A NEW DECLARATION OF SOVIET-AMERICAN PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONS.

THE AMERICAN VIEW OF THE SUMMIT IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT. U.S. OFFICIALS SAY IT SHOULD BE A SERIOUS WORKING MEETING, WITH AS LITTLE POMP AND CEREMONY AS POSSIBLE.

AND DIFFERING FROM PREVIOUS SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMITS, THIS CARTER-BREZHNEV MEETING MAY HAVE FEW AGREEMENTS TO DEAL WITH OTHER THAN A STRATEGIC ARMS TREATY. IN PAST SUMMITS, THERE WERE ACCORDS ON SOVIET-AMERICAN SPACE COOPERATION, TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE, AND TRADE. BUT U.S. OFFICIALS FORESEE FEW IF ANY SUCH AGREEMENTS COMING UP NOW.

THE SUMMIT MAY LAST ONLY A FEW DAYS -- AT LEAST THE FORMAL PART IN WASHINGTON, AND POSSIBLY CAMP DAVID. PRESIDENT BREZHNEV'S ILL HEALTH AND FADING STAMINA ARE THE REASONS. THERE IS SOME TALK OF PERHAPS INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON SAINT SIMONS ISLAND, JUST OFF THE COAST OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HOME STATE OF GEORGIA.

THESE DETAILS ARE STILL TO BE WORKED OUT IN EXCHANGES WITH SOVIET PLANNING OFFICIALS. BUT AMERICANS ARE NOW LOOKING TO THE MIDDLE OF JANUARY, PERHAPS THE END, FOR THE SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT.

IT ALL DEPENDS, OF COURSE, ON WHETHER SECRETARY VANCE AND FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO CAN COME UP NEXT WEEK IN GENEVA WITH THE DRAFT OF A SALT TWO TREATY. THAT HAS BEEN, AND REMAINS THE CENTERPIECE OF THE U.S. SOVIET SUMMIT THAT ORIGINALLY WAS TO BRING PRESIDENT BREZHNEV TO THE UNITED STATES IN NINETEEN-SEVENTY-FIVE.

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WJL/RD